

**Loyce Phillips
Narrator**

**Janet Worthington
Interviewer**

**Gary Worthington
Video Photography**

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At the Loyce Phillips Home
John Day, Oregon**

Loyce Phillips -LP
Janet Worthington -JW
Gary Worthington -GW

JW: Let's begin by talking about your contact with Kam Wah Chung, and Doc Hay, Lung On, and the Chinese community. How did you...what contact did you have and how did you know about them?

LP: It was through my dad. He went doctored with Doctor Hay and I would go with him down to the Kam Wah Chung, because I liked the candy that Doctor Hay would give me, but, you know, when I walked in I would stay real close to my dad, because it was so dark and smelly in there and Doc Hay was always sitting in this little cage with a little cap on. It was so dimly lit that it was just real spooky for me, because I was probably only maybe six, seven years old at the time.

JW: So could you tell us a little more...tell me about what you remember about the room, you said it was dark—

LP: It was so dark...well, it had a strong odor...I thought it was a...what do you call it...the dope that they use...the um—

JW: The opium?

LP: The opium is what I thought it was...um...it had a real rank smell. It didn't smell like smoke to me, but I was later told that that was what it was, was the opium.

JW: You said, when you came in, that Doc Hay would be sitting in a cage? Now here's...this is a kind of layout of the building, and here's where you come in the front door, and then there's a little room off here. [Looking at a Floor Plan]

LP: When I come in the room here, this is where that little cage was, and he had lots of bottles of...evidently medicine and what not surrounding him in this little cage. That's what I remember was...so many...a lot of bottles and what not...little...all different size bottles and stuff.

JW: Do you remember any of the furniture that may have been along...was there anything in front of that cage, or beside it?

LP: I believe there was a chair there, because I know my dad sat down.

JW: Oh, he did?

LP: Yes, and I stood right beside him.

JW: And then, Doc Hay would come out of the cage?

LP: No.

JW: No?

LP: No, you talked to him while he sat in the cage. He didn't come out of the cage.

JW: He didn't come out?

LP: No, It was opened at one end, you know, but he didn't come out.

JW: So, there were bars there and he—

LP: Yes.

JW: And he talked to your dad through the bars?

LP: Uh-huh.

JW: Do you remember anything else in this room? Was there—

LP: Not really, because like I said, it was so dimly lit and at that age I really wasn't interested. What if I was interested in staying by my dad?

JW: I can understand that. [Laughing] Did you ever go into any other parts of the—

LP: No, I didn't.

JW: Or see into any of the other rooms?

LP: Nope, I remember this room off to the left, but I couldn't tell you what was in there at the time.

JW: Do you remember the floors? Were the floors...was there anything on the floors?

LP: No, I don't remember.

JW: How did you travel to visit Doc Hay?

LP: Well, we had a car at that time.

JW: Did you?

LP: Uh-huh, and it was later in the evening as I recall, a couple of times, because my dad would work. He was a barber at that time and would have to wait until after he got through before we went down to the Kam Wah Chung. I don't know what dad was there for. I know that he...Doc Hay gave him a sack of something or other that he was to take home and boil, and then strain it, and drink the liquid. I know it was real smelly when he was trying to cook it on the stove. [Both Laugh]

JW: Do you remember what it smelled like?

LP: Not really.

JW: Just it was just—

LP: It just...different smell...it had kinda a strong odor to it.

JW: What about the outside of the building? Do you recall—

LP: No, I don't.

JW: So, you would just drive up to the front door—

LP: Right, and then go in.

JW: Were there any other customers in there ever when you were there?

LP: No.

JW: Any people?

LP: No, there was never anyone else in there.

JW: There wasn't?

LP: Nope.

JW: Did you know other people who went to see him though?

LP: Oh, yes.

JW: Yes?

LP: Several of my uncles on my mother's side would doctor with Doctor Hay. There were numerous people that doctored with him.

JW: Did you ever go in during the wintertime? Was there furnace, or a heater of any kind that you recall?

LP: Not that I recall.

JW: Okay, anything else about the layout of the building or anything that was going on—

LP: No, I just...at that time...like I said, it was so dark in there that...a...and I just...as a young kid, I just wasn't interested...only sticking by my dad and getting that piece of candy from Doctor Hay.

JW: What kind of candy did he give—

LP: It was candy kisses with peanut butter filling.

JW: Oh...that sounds good.

LP: Wrapped up in a red wax paper wrapper.

JW: And he offered this to you?

LP: Yes.

JW: Every time you came?

LP: Yes. He would hand it to you personally. He wouldn't say anything.

JW: Did he talk to your father?

LP: Yes. He was a man of few words.

JW: Was he?

LP: Yes.

JW: Could you understand what he said? Was his English clear?

LP: You know, I just don't remember. I don't remember.

JW: So when he talked to your father [phone ringing]

JW: You mentioned that Doc Hay sat behind a cage and that he wore a cap. Could you tell me more about—

LP: Kind of a dark skull like cap, but not exactly a skull cap, but it fit tight on the top of his head.

JW: How else would you describe him?

LP: Well, I just remember it was a dark color, probably black.

JW: What about the rest of what he wore and how he looked?

LP: That I just can't...I cannot recall.

JW: How do you feel that he interacted with your father? In what ways did he act as a doctor? Did he do a diagnosis? Did he—

LP: I assumed he did, because he'd give dad this medicine to take home and to boil, and to drink, but what the diagnosis was, I have no idea. No idea at all.

JW: But your father...he never came out to actually look at your father and examine him?

LP: No, he held his hand. I remember that. He kinda rubbed on the inside of his wrist. I remember that part.

JW: Did you see anything...were there things there that were for sale? Did you see the store part of it?

LP: No, I don't recall any of that.

JW: Any of the store part? How about Lung On, did you ever meet him?

LP: No, I don't remember him. The rest of dad's family knew him well, but I don't recall ever meeting him.

JW: Did they talk about him? What did they say about him?

LP: That I don't recall.

JW: What about the Chinese community that was here in John Day? What do you remember about the whole community and there interactions with others?

LP: I just remember the area and I know this started with my dad when he was a young boy of selling suckers to the Chinese that they would catch in the river. Then come nighttime they'd go round take the suckers out of the tub or what ever they kept them in and sell them to them again the next day. Now this went on up through the generations, because my husband and some of his friends did the same thing. You know, I think the Chinese knew exactly what those boys were doing, but they weren't going to say anything, because they wanted to keep in good grace with the rest of the community. I don't think any of the boys were ever caught or challenged the fact that that's what they were doing. But, I say this started with my dad when he was a young boy.

JW: How did the community change over time?

LP: I think the community began to, more less, accept the Chinese, but, of course, over time became less and less of them.

JW: What makes you think they accepted the people?

LP: Well, you didn't hear the talk and the majority would speak to them. There were a lot of people that were doctoring with Doc Hay. My husband's grandfather and grandmother came all the way from [unclear] Oregon to doctor with Doc Hay. A lot of people come from miles around plus the local ones. There wasn't many white doctors back then in the community.

JW: Do you recall stories of this doctoring and what Doc Hay did and what people had?

LP: I heard stories that he was really good with people with blood poisoning. That's the one thing that I do remember.

JW: Do you recall any specific details of anything—

LP: No, I don't.

JW: Any of the treatments that he did or how he helped people?

LP: No, I just wasn't old enough.

JW: As you said, its not a thing of great interest when your six or seven years old.

LP: Right.

JW: As the people diminished, in terms of China Town, then how did the community change? Were there changes in attitudes? Was there a direct relationship between fewer Chinese and the better attitude toward them, do you think?

LP: Well, I can only go on, like my dad's side of the family; they become real good friends with the Chinese that were left here.

JW: Oh, they did?

LP: Right.

JW: Did they have social activities; were they involved in some social activities?

LP: I don't recall that. The social activities, I think, were mainly private not out in a social facility or something like that.

JW: So, what would they do together, how would they interact?

LP: They...a...how do I want to put it...they would socialize with a little...a... liquor. When we would go to Portland, I know they would always communicate with the Chinese down there, and there was this special Chinese restaurant that we always went to and sometimes we'd always meet, like Wing, or some of the other Chinese that had been up here.

JW: Oh, I didn't realize, so you kept in contact with people who moved?

LP: My family...um my dad's family did, cause he had a brother in Portland too...and...a...they continued with their friendships.

JW: Well, that's interesting.

LP: When Doc Hay fell and broke his hip, down at the Kam Wah Chung, it was my uncle Cliff that took him to Portland for surgery.

JW: Oh, it was?

LP: Uh-huh. At that time we didn't have ambulances, we just had...Driscoll's had the Hurst and he wouldn't ride in it. He refused to ride in it, because he said that's where people died, so my uncle borrowed a station wagon and took Doc Hay to Portland, because at that time we didn't have the facilities here for surgery on a hip.

JW: Did he tell you any more about taking him to Portland?

LP: No, not really.

JW: Just put him in the back of the station wagon and took him over there. Then once he got there he helped him get into the hospital?

LP: Oh, I'm sure he did along with the hospital help and from there Doc Hay ended up in a nursing home and that's where he died.

JW: Have you heard anything about that? I've seen different stories about his stay in the nursing home.

LP: No, I haven't

JW: So, your family has had close connections—

LP: Yes, my dad's side of the family.

JW: Your dad's side of the family has had close connections?

LP: Yes.

JW: How long did that continue? Did that continue—

LP: Oh, it continued up till...a...oh...for years until...you know...years took it's toll on people. One of the things they used to do with, especially Doctor Bob, they'd take him deer hunting.

JW: Oh, did they?

LP: And, I guess that was quite an experience, cause he would get so excited, you know, but they had a great time. I don't know weather he ever really shot anything or not, but he'd go for the good times.

JW: Oh, did he?

LP: Yep.

JW: What can you tell me about when the store was reopened; you know it was closed for such a long time. Did you hear or were you involved at all—

LP: No, I wasn't.

JW: There's been different reports as to the condition of the store when it was reopened.

LP: That I just can't tell ya.

JW: How about Gordon Glass. Did you know him?

LP: Yes.

JW: What was his role in—

LP: Well, I really...I think he was one of the main instigators in getting the museum reopened and seeing the value that we had here in the community...historical value. I know he worked hard and long on it.

JW: Did he?

LP: Yes, he did. He and his wife Laurel, so they deserve a lot of credit.

JW: And, his wife's still alive?

LP: Yes, she lives in Arizona.

JW: So, she was involved a great deal too?

LP: Well, they worked together.

JW: Did they?

LP: Yeah, she put out a little historical brochure, I think every month or so, about the whole area, the whole Grant County, so she was involved.

JW: Do you have any copies of those brochures?

LP: Uh-huh.

JW: Do you?

LP: But, it's about the whole county, not about just the Kam Wah Chung.

JW: Do you know of any items from the store that might still be around in the community, or any souvenirs or photographs from Kam Wah Chung?

LP: Yes, I have the gold scales up there on the—

JW: Can we shoot a picture?

LP: Sure.

JW: Okay, at the end, any other items that you know?

LP: I know there's numerous items around over the community. Lily Wah, Bob's second wife, after Bob died, she had numerous sales, garage type sales and sold a lot of the things.

JW: She sold things from their house—

LP: And from the Kam Wah Chung, I understand. This is how I come to get the scales, because a friend of mine had bought them and Stan, of course, fell in love with them and the lady said, that when she was through with them she would give them to Stan. That's how come that I have them.

JW: Any other particular items that you know about that maybe—

LP: Well, I know that there are several around that have especially the little medicine bottles and like someone was saying about liniment bottles and dishes and what not, I know they are around different people have them.

JW: And most of them probably came from this garage sale—

LP: Yes, right, right.

JW: Are there other stories that you would like share with us about the Chinese and Kam Wah Chung or anything related to—

LP: This involves Kam Wah Chung...was a story of Buckaroo Sam.

JW: Oh, good.

LP: I don't know Buckaroo Sam's previous whereabouts before he came here, but my mother said, he was a very good person with horses, but where it was I don't know, because as I understand it not many of the Chinese worked as buckaroos in the community at that time, but what we think happened was he had a...he lived down around the community there...around Kam Wah Chung...and he had a fire and they shunned him, the rest of the Chinese shunned him and thought he was possessed with the Devil. This is when my grandma and grandpa Benson took him in at the restaurant and hotel that they had here in town for doing...he would do odd chores for them for his keep and they particularly took care of the big chicken pen that they had, because back then, you know, you raised your own chickens, and eggs, and hens, and what not, so he done that, and there's other odd jobs around the restaurant that he did. I can tell one story that my husband told me, he and a buddy were playing around, like young boys will do eight, nine, ten years old, and Buckaroo Sam went down to take care of the chickens and this other boys' name was Bob Smith says, you wanna hear some Chinese talk and of course Stan said, yes, so he went over and locked Buckaroo Sam in the chicken pen, [Both laugh] and the Chinese, he just let go with...hard telling what he was saying, but the boys they got quite a kick out of that. This went on a lot especially kids that age they would kinda torment the Chinese and they would put up with it, you know, they might give them a good cussing, but it was in Chinese, so they didn't have any idea what they were talking about. Along that this time, I think I was bout two or three years old we lived in the little parsonage down there by the old Adventist church and Buckaroo Sam would come down and he would pick different weeds out of the yard, he was afraid that I might get hurt or stuck by some of the weeds. At that time I don't think there was a regular lawn it was probably just grown up with different kind of weeds and he always

called me “little missy”, that he didn’t want “little missy” to get hurt by some of those weeds. He’d also do maybe some odd chores for mom, like maybe getting in the wood or something, but she liked him, she said, he was a very, very gentle person, very considerate, and she liked him, said he never...was never a nuisance, very quite, he’d come down and pick out the weeds and maybe chop some wood or something for her and then he’d be gone.

JW: So, he stayed with your grandparents?

LP: At the hotel.

JW: For a long time?

LP: Until he died.

JW: Oh, he did?

LP: Uh-huh.

JW: Did he ever talk about his family?

LP: Not to me, of course, no, he was very quiet, they said, very quiet guy.

JW: Was he very different from the other Chinese men that were in the community, do you think?

LP: I don’t...I really don’t know, but I don’t think so. I’ve never heard any stories about him being different. The only thing was that he was shunned, because they thought he was possessed by the Devil, which you know, Chinese are very superstitious.

JW: Okay, those are very great stories.

LP: It would be interesting to know his...a little about his history...where he came from before he came here.

JW: Yeah, and if he did have the facility with horses [unclear]

LP: Where it was

JW: [unclear] Any other stories? You were telling us yesterday about the cook...the stories about the cook?

LP: That was um...they hired out I guess as cooks on a lot of the ranches, but we never at the...Buckaroo Sam didn’t cook at the restaurant, no. To my knowledge I don’t think they never had a Chinese cook at the restaurant.

GW: Yesterday, you were telling us about a Chinese man who ended up killing sheep.

LP: Oh, yes, that's an old story. That was um...Imager Stuart's grandfather. The story comes from Stan's grandfather back then and he said, that the grandfather, who they called Billy, got mad at one of the sheep and he picked up a club and started killing some of the sheep and he had a Chinese herdsman with him, so he picked up a stick and started doing the same thing, and old Billy said, Oh, no, no, no, I can kill enough. How many sheep they killed I have no idea, but that was the story that was going around.
[Both laugh]

JW: Were there other stories about some of the folks, the Chinese people?

LP: Well, there is probably a lot around, but those are the only ones really that I can recall, but I think in interviews with other people other stories will come to light.

JW: Is there anything else you want to add...about...maybe something...how about your own personal feelings and your own personal connections with—

LP: I really didn't have them, other than going with my dad when I was young, however in later years I remember meeting...I think it was Wing down at the Chinese restaurant in Portland. I was with my dad and my aunt Kisty and I remember meeting them down there, but I really didn't have any other social life with them or activities.

JW: What do you feel were there contributions to the development to this area, you have lived here all of your life?

LP: Yes.

JW: What did they contribute to—

LP: They pretty much kept to themselves. I can hear stories that in previous years they were quite the gardeners and grew a lot of produce, of course the local people I know enjoyed and bought from them, but as far as their contribution, that I don't know. Of course, they were banned from Canyon City on building again after a fire up there, so maybe they were helpful on establishing the city of John Day, who knows.

JW: That's right, very possible, anything else that you would like to share with us?

LP: Not that I can recall right now.

JW: Well, thank you very much.

LP: Your welcome.

GW: End of Interview. [Showing video of gold scales]